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Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Concluding observations on the initial report of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the initial report of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (CRPD/C/MKD/1 and Corr.1) at its 415th and 416th meetings (see CRPD/C/SR.415 and 416), held on 10 and 11 September 2018. It adopted the present concluding observations at its 426th meeting, held on 18 September 2018.

2. The Committee welcomes the initial report of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which was prepared in accordance with the Committee's reporting guidelines, and thanks the State party for the written replies (CRPD/C/MKD/Q/1/Add.1) to the list of issues prepared by the Committee (CRPD/C/MKD/Q/1).

3. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue held during the consideration of the report and commends the State party for its high-level delegation, which was headed by the Special Counsellor, Cabinet of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

II. Positive aspects

4. The Committee commends the State party for:

(a) Its efforts to align its national mechanisms with article 33 of the Convention;

(b) Its renewed ban on the institutionalization of children and its commitment to end the placement of children under 3 years of age in institutions;

(c) The adoption of urgent measures to improve the situation at the Demir Kapija institution, the process of developing a new strategy for deinstitutionalization as a first step and the alignment of anti-discrimination law policies;

(d) The establishment of the National Coordination Body for Implementation of the Convention;

(e) Expressing opposition to the draft additional protocol to the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine and for reaffirming at the international and regional levels the principles and rights of persons with disabilities, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

* Adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session (27 August–21 September 2018).

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III. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

A. General principles and obligations (arts. 1–4)

5. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of harmonization of national legislation, policy and programmes with the Convention, and the persistence of the medical model of disability;

(b) The use of different disability assessments and definitions in the legal framework of the State party that are not in line with the human rights-based model of disability;

(c) The absence of clear plans, timelines or budgets to ensure the progressive implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities in consultation with the organizations of persons with disabilities.

6. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review and ensure harmonization of its legislation and policies with the Convention;**

(b) **Remove from its legislation, programmes, plans and policies derogatory terms relating to disability and ensure respect for the dignity of all persons with disabilities;**

(c) **Ensure that the disability assessment method fully incorporates the human rights-based approach to disability and takes the human rights approach by, inter alia:**

(i) **Involving organizations of persons with disabilities in the design of disability assessment;**

(ii) **Engaging persons with disabilities in generating the information on which disability assessments are made;**

(iii) **Eliminating multiple disability assessments and as a result reducing the burden on applicants;**

(iv) **Making information on assessment requirements user-accessible and user-friendly;**

(v) **Frequently reviewing assessment methods;**

(d) **Ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities are meaningfully involved in the design and evaluation of laws, policies, action plans, timelines and budgets and that their views are considered prior to adopting decisions affecting them.**

B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

7. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Article 9 of the State party's Constitution does not mention disability as a ground of discrimination;

(b) There are no penalties in national laws for public or private institutions or for individuals that discriminate against persons based on their disability. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of effective legal remedies against discrimination;

(c) Training on non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation are not regularly imparted to public and private actors.

8. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Revise all legislation to incorporate all forms of discrimination on grounds of disability, including multiple and intersecting discrimination;**

(b) **Establish measures to provide redress, including compensation, for persons who have faced discrimination on the basis of disability, and sanction perpetrators;**

(c) **Regularly train public and private actors on non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities, focusing on the human rights-based approach to disability instead of the traditional medical and charity approach.**

9. The Committee is concerned that the National Strategy on Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2010–2018 was not fully implemented, particularly in the field of support services that are necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities can live independently.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that adequate resources are allocated for the implementation of the new National Strategy on Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly regarding the support services necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities can live independently.**

Women with disabilities (art. 6)

11. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Existing legislation, particularly the Law on Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination and the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, does not contain specific measures on women and girls with disabilities, and as a result, women and girls with disabilities face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and exclusion in all areas of life;

(b) National gender policies and programmes do not include a disability perspective, and that disability is not mainstreamed in gender policies;

(c) There is a lack of specific measures to protect women and girls with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, from gender-based violence;

(d) There is poor access to mainstream services and reasonable accommodation for women and girls with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities.

12. **In line with its general comment No. 3 (2016) on women and girls with disabilities, and in the view of targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities and, in particular:**

(a) **Include specific measures for women and girls with disabilities in the existing legislation, mainstream their rights in gender policies and programmes and promote affirmative action to advance the rights of women and girls with disabilities;**

(b) **Implement effective legal, policy and practical measures to address gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities; prevent and investigate violations of their human rights and prosecute and punish those responsible; and ensure that those affected have access to immediate protection and accessible support services, including reasonable accommodation in mainstream services and shelter facilities;**

(c) **Take all measures necessary to increase the accessibility of mainstream services and reasonable accommodation for all women and girls with disabilities, and ensure the involvement of organizations of women and girls with disabilities in the development, implementation and monitoring of such services.**

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

13. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of specific legislation on the rights of children with disabilities in the State party;

(b) The lack of criminalization of violence against children with disabilities, including corporal punishment and sexual violence, in all settings;

(c) The expiration of the National Strategy for Equality and Non-discrimination 2005–2015 and the non-inclusion of the rights of children with disabilities, including the principle of the best interest of the child, in national policies, plans and programmes for children;

(d) The prevalent stigma, discrimination and harmful stereotypes against children with disabilities, and the enduring approach to seclusion and institutionalization;

(e) The lack of early assistance and provision of services for independent living;

(f) The absence of mechanisms to ensure the participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes affecting their lives, particularly the lack of mechanisms to ensure the right of children with disabilities to have their views taken into account on matters pertaining to them and their families, including participation in all protection mechanisms.

14. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt specific legislation on the rights of children with disabilities;**

(b) **Criminalize violence against children with disabilities in all settings, including corporal punishment and sexual violence, and adopt and implement measures for sanctioning the perpetrators;**

(c) **Adopt a new National Strategy for Equality and Non-discrimination that includes specific measures to protect the rights of children with disabilities, based on sex, age, gender and ethnicity;**

(d) **Mainstream the rights of children with disabilities, including the principle of the best interest of the child, in national policies, plans, programmes and compliance frameworks that apply to children and young people in general;**

(e) **Adopt measures to address stigma and discrimination against, and stereotypes that are harmful to, children with disabilities;**

(f) **Provide continuous support for children with disabilities, from early assistance to independent living;**

(g) **Promote comprehensive strategies and mechanisms for the full participation of children with disabilities in consultations, decision-making processes and policy development, through representative organizations of persons with disabilities, in order to promote an adequate choice of services that best fit the needs of the child, taking into consideration the child's evolving capacities.**

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

15. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of a national policy and strategy on disability awareness and the lack of efforts to prevent and combat disability stereotypes and discrimination on the basis of impairment;

(b) Ad hoc activities and awareness-raising campaigns that focus on impairments rather than rights and reinforce the charity-based approach to disability.

16. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a national policy and strategy on disability awareness to prevent and combat discrimination faced by persons with disabilities, with the participation of persons with disabilities, aimed at combating stigma and stereotypes;**

(b) **Conduct continuous campaigns about the Convention in the public and private sectors and among persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.**

Accessibility (art. 9)

17. The Committee notes that the State party's legislation provides for a systematic and comprehensive approach to the right to physical access. However, it is concerned that:

(a) There are no specific, effective measures, including sanctions for non-compliance, for the implementation of the legislation that provides for access to the physical environment and to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems;

(b) Access to buildings, transport and public institutions and services remains insufficient outside the capital, including at the international airport, where there is a lack of application of all international standards for accessibility;

(c) The level of cooperation between government departments and agencies with organizations of persons with disabilities with regard to implementation and evaluation of accessibility standards is minimal;

(d) The State party's legislation does not provide for a systematic or comprehensive approach to accessibility of information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems.

18. **In the light of article 9 of the Convention and its general comment No. 2 (2014) on accessibility, the Committee recommends that the State party, in its efforts to meet targets 11.2 and 11.17 of the Sustainable Development Goals:**

(a) **Review its legislation to provide for the mandatory application of accessibility standards in all areas, particularly regarding buildings, transport, other facilities and services open to the public, and information and communications technologies and systems, and for the strict application of sanctions to those who fail to apply them;**

(b) **Include the accessibility standards as a requirement in all public procurement of services and construction and monitor the implementation;**

(c) **Ensure that access to buildings, transport, information and communications technologies and systems, other facilities and services open to the public and public institutions and services is available on all the territory of the State party;**

(d) **Speed up the adoption of the comprehensive national action plan on implementing accessibility standards, in close consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, with clearly defined time frames, monitoring and evaluation benchmarks.**

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

19. The Committee is concerned about the lack of incorporation of perspectives concerning disability, accessibility and support to persons with disabilities in the national Protection and Rescue Directorate, and the lack of emergency numbers in accessible formats, accessible equipment and provision for emergency and rescue training courses for persons with disabilities.

20. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Revise its legislation, policies and guidelines to ensure that disaster risk reduction management and humanitarian aid are accessible to and inclusive of persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Provide emergency numbers in accessible formats, equipment and emergency and rescue training courses for persons with disabilities.**

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

21. The Committee is concerned that the laws in the State party, especially the existing guardianship system, negate or restrict the legal capacity of persons with disabilities, limiting their right to decision-making and the right to choice.

22. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Repeal all discriminatory provisions that permit deprivation of legal capacity based on impairment and replace them with supported decision-making mechanisms that respect the autonomy, will and preferences of the person concerned;**

(b) **Conduct capacity-building activities for public officials on the right to equal recognition before the law of persons with disabilities and supported decision-making arrangements.**

Access to justice (art. 13)

23. The Committee is concerned at:

(a) The lack of consistency in laws with regard to access to justice for persons with disabilities and the lack of legislation on hate crimes relating to disability;

(b) The lack of access to the judicial system due to the lack of knowledge of disability issues within the judicial sector, and the lack of adequate procedural accommodations, information in accessible formats and accessibility to judicial premises;

(c) The bureaucratic restrictions to free legal aid under the current Law on Free Legal Aid.

24. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take measures to align the laws requiring courts to facilitate trial procedures and procedural accommodation for persons with disabilities and extend such measures to the police and prosecution services; and effectively implement the principle of procedural accommodation under article 27 on the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016);**

(b) **Take measures to amend the criminal law in order for crimes against persons with disabilities to be recognized as hate crimes;**

(c) **Adopt measures to ensure that all persons with disabilities, especially persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind persons and deafblind persons, have access to justice, and that information and communications are available in accessible formats such as Braille, accessible electronic formats, tactile, Easy Read and sign language;**

(d) **Conduct training for law enforcement personnel on the human rights-based approach to disability;**

(e) **Ensure that access to free legal aid for persons with disabilities is not restricted in the new draft law on free legal aid.**

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

25. The Committee is concerned about the legal provisions allowing for deprivation of liberty, non-consensual treatment and restraint of persons with psychosocial disabilities in mental health facilities.

26. **The Committee recommends that, in line with its guidelines on article 14 (2015), the State party repeal all legal provisions allowing for involuntary deprivation of liberty on the basis of impairment and involuntary treatment of persons with psychosocial disabilities, and further develop recovery-oriented and community-based rehabilitation services for persons with psychosocial disabilities.**

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)

27. The Committee is concerned that the Law on Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence is not sufficiently explicit on the prohibition of exploitation and abuse of and violence against persons with disabilities. It is also concerned that there are not enough shelters for victims of family violence and that the services provided there are not always accessible to persons with disabilities.

28. **The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to:**

(a) **Review the existing legislation and policies to incorporate remedies and sanctions that prevent, in both the public and the private spheres, all forms of violence against and abuse and ill-treatment of persons with disabilities, particularly women, girls and children with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities;**

(b) **Train the personnel working in shelters on the human rights-based approach to disability;**

(c) **Ensure that shelters and centres for victims of violence and the services provided there are accessible to persons with disabilities;**

(d) **Conduct investigations into all allegations of violence against and abuse of persons with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, and suspicious deaths of residents in institutions.**

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

29. The Committee is concerned that a legal guardian can authorize medical interventions, including abortion and sterilization, without the free and informed consent of the person with disabilities.

30. **The Committee urges the State party to adopt effective measures to ensure respect for the right of persons with disabilities to provide their free and informed consent prior to medical treatment, including sterilization and abortion, and to provide efficient support mechanisms for decision-making in the State party.**

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)

31. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The weakness of the deinstitutionalization process and the emphasis placed on the resettlement of persons with disabilities in small group homes instead of independent living arrangements;

(b) The absence of services and provision of personal assistance to promote independent living of persons with disabilities in the State party;

(c) The fact that the State party still spends more on institutions than community-based services;

(d) The fact that the personal assistance pilot programme is discriminatory on the basis of age.

32. **With reference to its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Provide adequate human, financial and technical resources for the full implementation of deinstitutionalization, particularly for implementing the transition to independent living conditions;**

(b) **Allocate sufficient resources for the provision of personal assistance and to ensure that services in the community are available, accessible, affordable, accommodating and of high quality in order to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to live independently and be included in the community;**

(c) **Adopt the measures necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities have a legal entitlement to a sufficient personal budget for independent living, which takes into account the additional costs related to disability, and redirect resources from institutionalization to community-based services;**

(d) **Adopt measures to ensure the provision of personal assistance for persons with disabilities, regardless of age limitations.**

Personal mobility (art. 20)

33. The Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to promote access to assistive devices for persons with disabilities. However, it is concerned about costs charged for orthopaedic and other mobility aids, which makes them unaffordable for persons with disabilities.

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure the provision of mobility and assistive devices, including assistance technologies, at affordable costs for persons with disabilities.**

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)

35. The Committee is concerned about the very limited amount of public information that is accessible to persons with disabilities, including through sign language interpretation, in tactile formats such as Braille, in Easy Read and other alternative formats of communication in both public and private media outlets. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of standardization, recognition and implementation of sign language as an official language.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Consider adopting the bill on the right to access information and eliminate any limitation that hinders the exercise by persons with disabilities of their freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others, including by ensuring that website owners and designers make their websites accessible to persons with disabilities, especially persons who are blind or visually impaired;**

(b) **Adopt concrete legal and implementation measures to standardize, recognize and use sign language as an official language to be taught in schools, develop a pool of qualified sign language interpreters and teachers of tactile, Braille and Easy Read skills, and ensure that television stations provide news and programmes in accessible formats, especially for persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing.**

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

37. The Committee is concerned about the legal provisions in the Law on the Family that discriminate against persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities with regard to the right to marry and form a family. The Committee is further concerned about the provision in that Law that requires persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities to be certified as "knowledgeable and understanding".

38. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review the Law on the Family to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise their rights relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships on an equal basis with others and on the basis of their free and informed consent;**

(b) **Adopt measures to promote adequate training of judicial and social workers and legal protection to ensure that persons with disabilities are not**

discriminated against during legal and administrative proceedings concerning their sexual and reproductive rights, the right to create a family and legal custody of their children.

Education (art. 24)

39. The Committee is concerned that the Law on Protection of Children and the Law on Primary Education still allow for the segregation of students with disabilities, and that segregated education environments persist, especially for students with intellectual disabilities. The Committee is further concerned that there is no updated comprehensive strategy aimed at an inclusive education system, with fixed deadlines and outputs and allocation of adequate financial, human and technical resources, especially for students with intellectual disabilities.

40. **In line with its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education, and targets 4.5 and 4.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Revise the Law on Protection of Children and the Law on Primary Education so that they expressly promote inclusive education and include disability as a ground for discrimination, and prohibit denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of disability-based discrimination;**

(b) **Immediately enact a plan of transition to ensure inclusive education for persons with disabilities at all levels, including in higher education institutions;**

(c) **Provide adequate support, resources and qualified training of teachers and auxiliary staff to foster inclusion, particularly of students with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and girls with disabilities;**

(d) **Ensure universal accessibility to educational premises, including universities;**

(e) **Explicitly and immediately enforce the prohibition of exclusion of learners with disabilities from regular schools on the basis of their impairments.**

Health (art. 25)

41. The Committee is concerned that disability is not a ground for discrimination in the Law on Protection of Patients' Rights. It is also concerned about the general lack of accessibility to mainstream health services, in particular:

(a) The age constraints to accessing free health care and treatment, coupled with the exemptions in the Law on Health Insurance that discriminate against persons with disabilities;

(b) The absence of frameworks to guarantee persons with disabilities access to free and informed consent with regard to health services;

(c) The lack of availability and affordability of specialized health-care services related to disabilities;

(d) The lack of access to basic medical products necessary to maintain the best possible lifelong conditions;

(e) The lack of information on sexual and reproductive health in accessible formats for persons with disabilities, including women and girls, and the lack of specialized services for girls and women with disabilities in all parts of the State party;

(f) The poor access to health care for children with disabilities and the lack of specialized services for them.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Include disability as a ground for discrimination in the Law on Protection of Patients' Rights;**

(b) **Remove age constraints to accessing free health care and treatment, as well as any exemptions in the Law on Health Insurance that discriminate against persons with disabilities;**

(c) **Adopt a strategy to ensure free or affordable access for persons with disabilities to all required health services, including by training medical personnel on the rights of persons with disabilities and the human rights-based approach to disability;**

(d) **Adopt health protocols aimed at ensuring the right of persons with disabilities to free and informed consent to medical treatment;**

(e) **Take measures to ensure the availability and accessibility of health-care facilities and services for persons with disabilities, including by removing physical obstacles to health centres and providing information in accessible formats;**

(f) **Ensure the dissemination of information on sexual and reproductive rights in appropriate formats for all persons with disabilities, the availability of gender and age-sensitive services, and the availability of specialized services for persons with disabilities in all parts of the State party;**

(g) **Promptly adopt and implement a new action plan on improving health care for children with disabilities;**

(h) **Promote the availability and affordability of specialized health-care services related to disabilities.**

Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)

43. The Committee is concerned about the lack of adequate legislation in the State party to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to habilitation and rehabilitation services. It is also concerned that habilitation and rehabilitation are not specifically defined within the laws and regulations of the State party.

44. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt the legislation necessary to define and ensure access to habilitation and rehabilitation services, ensuring it is human rights-based and developed with the involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities.**

Work and employment (art. 27)

45. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) Discrimination against and inequalities in employment and working conditions for persons with disabilities, particularly women, notably in several provisions of the Law on Civil Servants;

(b) The fact that the Law on Labour Relations does not specifically oblige employers to provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities;

(c) The fact that persons with disabilities and public and private employers are not fully aware of the rights of and opportunities for employment in the open labour market.

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party, in close collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities:**

(a) **Review and evaluate its existing legislation in both the public and private sectors to bring it into line with the Convention, take measures to increase vocational training, and adopt legislation with effective remedies and sanctions with respect to disability-based discrimination in recruitment, promotion and retention of employees;**

(b) **Take effective and affirmative measures to ensure the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors and ensure that the open**

labour market is inclusive and accessible, that reasonable accommodation is available and that the duty to provide reasonable accommodation is explicitly prescribed in legislation.

Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)

47. The Committee is concerned that the Law on Social Protection does not include disability as a basis for discrimination. Furthermore, disability benefits are age restrictive, as persons with disabilities aged between 18 and 26 are not eligible to benefits. The Committee is also concerned about the administrative and bureaucratic requirements for persons with disabilities to access social benefits. Moreover, it is concerned that persons with disabilities face challenges in meeting the additional costs of disability.

48. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review its Law on Social Protection by introducing disability in the anti-discrimination clause and relevant by-laws and benefits schemes with the aim of guaranteeing an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities, including through compensation schemes in the form of allowances that will enable persons with disabilities to meet disability-related expenses;**

(b) **Repeal the provisions restricting the eligibility of persons with disabilities to social benefits to a particular age range, allocate certain allowances and benefits to children with disabilities, and ensure provision of equal material support to biological and foster families;**

(c) **Pay attention to the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to empower and promote the economic inclusion of all persons, irrespective of disability.**

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

49. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) Election laws that establish "mental capacity" as a prerequisite for the right to vote and run for public office, thus denying these rights to persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities;

(b) The inaccessibility of polling stations and their environment, particularly for persons with disabilities who live in institutions, and the absence of electoral materials and information in accessible formats, such as Braille, tactile, sign language and Easy Read, for persons with disabilities;

(c) The lack of training for election officials to address the requirements of persons with disabilities at polling stations;

(d) The lack of support to enable persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities to exercise their right to vote and stand for election.

50. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review its election laws with a view to removing the prerequisites that prevent persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities from exercising their right to vote and run for office;**

(b) **Adopt measures to ensure the accessibility of polling stations and their environments, particularly for persons with disabilities who live in institutions, including the provision of electoral materials and information in accessible formats for all persons with disabilities;**

(c) **Conduct appropriate training for election officials on the rights of persons with disabilities at all stages of the electoral process to enable the effective participation of persons with disabilities in electoral and political processes;**

(d) **Provide the necessary support for persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities to exercise their right to vote and stand for election.**

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)

51. The Committee is concerned about the State party's insufficient efforts to support access to and participation of persons with disabilities in cultural, recreational, leisure and sporting activities. The Committee regrets that the State party has yet to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.

52. **The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to support and encourage the participation of persons with disabilities, including children, in cultural, recreational, leisure and sporting activities. It encourages the State party to promptly ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.**

C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

53. The Committee is concerned at the lack of consistent and comparable statistics on persons with disabilities and the lack of human rights indicators in the available data. The Committee is also concerned about the extent to which disability-related indicators are effectively applied in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

54. **The Committee recommends that the State party apply disability-related indicators in the monitoring of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially target 17.18, and significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status (including asylum-seeking and refugee status), disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in its national context.**

International cooperation (art. 32)

55. The Committee is concerned about the lack of effective consultation, participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in international cooperation programmes.

56. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure the effective participation, inclusion and consultation of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in international cooperation programmes.**

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

57. The Committee is concerned about the lack of resources available for the effective and comprehensive monitoring conducted by the independent monitoring framework established in accordance with article 33 (2) of the Convention, which limits the support provided to organizations of persons with disabilities to participate in the monitoring process.

58. **The Committee recommends that the State party provide sufficient funding for monitoring frameworks and organizations of persons with disabilities to enable them to monitor the implementation of the Convention across the State party, taking into account the guidelines on independent monitoring frameworks and their participation in the work of the Committee (CRPD/C/1/Rev.1, annex).**

IV. Follow-up

Dissemination of information

59. **The Committee emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations and draws the State party's attention to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 18 (accessibility) and 24 (access to justice).**

60. **The Committee requests the State party to implement the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. It recommends that the State party transmit the concluding observations for consideration and action to members of the Government and parliament, officials in relevant ministries, the judiciary and members of relevant professional groups, such as education, medical and legal professionals, as well as to local authorities, the private sector and the media, using modern social communication strategies.**

61. **The Committee strongly encourages the State party to involve civil society organizations, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in the preparation of its periodic report.**

62. **The Committee requests that the State party disseminate the present concluding observations widely, including to non-governmental organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities, and to persons with disabilities themselves and members of their families, in national and minority languages, including sign language, and in accessible formats, and to make them available on the government website on human rights.**

Next periodic report

63. **The Committee requests the State party to submit its combined second, third and fourth periodic reports by 29 June 2026 and to include in them information on the implementation of the recommendations made in the present concluding observations. The Committee also requests the State party to consider submitting the above-mentioned reports under the Committee's simplified reporting procedure, according to which the Committee prepares a list of issues at least one year prior to the due date set for the report of a State party. The replies of a State party to such a list of issues constitute its report.**